

How To Build Pootzy

A 6 Foot 6 Inch Dinghy

THIS dinghy, while very small, is considered the maximum size that would fit the available space on the cabin top of a small cruising boat. In many cases, particularly for the small cruising yachts, the necessity for a dinghy is greatly exaggerated, especially if on long runs where it must be towed. In such cases it is seldom very useful in taking on supplies, when it is much more convenient for the cruiser to lay alongside the float or dock for this purpose. As a lifeboat the average dinghy is extremely dubious. In addition and from a practical viewpoint, the drag in towing a dinghy behind a boat of light displacement causes much greater loss in speed than would be experienced on a boat of much heavier displacement. Thus about the only time a dinghy would really be useful would be for an occasional visit ashore in some quiet sheltered cove or anchorage.

One answer to the problem might be to use an inflatable rubber life raft, but besides the usual nuisance of inflating they are much better and also require greater care so as to not puncture the tubes on sharp rocks or sticks when beaching the boat. In their favor it can be said that they are light in weight and occupy very little stowage space, and would be a much more satisfactory emergency lifeboat than many dinghies now in use. However it

was decided that a much more substantial dinghy was desired for landing on shore and thus Pootzy was developed.

This dinghy is only six feet six inches long by thirty-eight inches wide and will be built quite light for ease of handling when stowing on deck. Complete with all equipment except oars, Pootzy should not weigh much more than fifty-five pounds, which is about double that of a one-man rubber life raft which carries two people. This little dinghy can carry two and it is to be noted that the oarsman seat is in the shape of a tee, so that with two locations for oarlocks his position can be varied to suit, depending on one or two in the dinghy.

The gunwale is shown on the inboard side to facilitate fitting a three-quarter round, rubber filled canvas fender, but this could be reversed if desired, should a rope or any other type of fender be used. At this point a word should be mentioned regarding the use of plywood, which should be marine plywood in accordance with the joint, Army-Navy specifications JAN-P-66, dated September 22, 1944, of one species throughout, either group I or group II in accordance with table I for grade A marine plywood should a hardwood plywood be desired, although exterior type plywood bearing the grade mark EXT-DFPA will be equally

satisfactory if building or fir plywood and painted. However all the plywood should be bonded in a hot press with a synthetic resin glue of the phenol, melamine or resorcinol type. In addition all faying surfaces and joints should be glued together with a waterproof resorcinol glue in addition to being thoroughly screwed.

While not indicated, the pram should be built upside down, using molds of any material at stations $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 2 and 3, which together with the transoms will hold the shape of the sides and bottom until they have been thoroughly fastened together. Incidentally the dimensions are to the outside of planking and allowance for the thickness of planking must be made when making the molds. The necessity of bracing the molds and transoms to form a rigid frame to prevent any possible distortion cannot be overemphasized.

The keel batten and chine logs should be in a single length of mahogany or ash beveled in cross section to fit the planking, notched into the molds, and ends mortised into the transoms. The side planking should not be directly fastened to the end grain of the transoms, but fastened to one-half by one inch mahogany check blocks fitted for this purpose and planking butted against the transom.

The side and bottom planking should first be carefully fitted and it should be fastened into place with screws without glue just to insure a tight fit. Then the screws should be backed out, all dirt cleaned off the faying surfaces, glue applied to these sur-

faces, and all fastened together as soon as possible in order to prevent the glue from starting to set before the plank is fastened into place. However in no case should the screws, which should be of bronze, be countersunk into the plywood more than an extra turn after driving flush, in order to permit the paint or varnish to cover the heads.

After the sides and bottom have been completed the dinghy can then be turned over with the molds, and the steam bent frame at station 2 that acts as a midship stiffener can be added; also the gunwales and seats can be installed, removing the molds as necessary. The remaining items as rubbing rails, knees, fender, oarlock sockets and towing ring on the outside of the bow transom then can all be added. After careful sanding, the plywood can be treated with a linseed oil type sealer containing a minimum of five per cent chlorinated phenol, and then the entire boat should be finished with a minimum of at least four coats of the desired marine finish.

This practically completes the description of Pootzy, a very small dinghy for those requiring a small boat to stow on deck, yet ample for two to get ashore in sheltered water. However, as an amateur builder might require additional information not covered by this article, it is suggested that they consult such books as William F. Crosby's *Amateur Boat Building*, Howard I. Chappelle's *Boat Building*, or Edwin Monk's *Modern Boat Building* (all obtainable through THE RUDDER Book Department).

